

**MEMORY DEVICE AND METHOD USING POSITIVE GATE
STRESS TO RECOVER OVERERASED CELL**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of erasing a flash electrically erasable read only memory (EEPROM) device composed of a plurality of memory cells includes pre-programming the plurality of memory cells, applying an erase pulse to the plurality of memory cells followed by an erase verification. The erase verification is followed by soft programming any memory cells having a threshold voltage below a predetermined minimum level and applying a positive gate stress to the plurality of memory cells. The erase method prevents overerasing and provides a tightened threshold voltage distribution.

10 R:\JWorgull\AMDS\PH0626us\H0626app.doc